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by 787

14 December 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Comments on Khrushchev's Remarks

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1. Khrushchev's various remarks, private as well as public, on military and strategic matters, have frequently failed to express fully the operative Soviet policy. For example, he made several statements on the "ultimate" nature of the ICBM, and on the obsolescence of manned bombers, in late 1957 during the first flush of his missile successes. Nevertheless, Soviet professional military discussions in journals, and the composition of the Soviet armed forces, have not reflected these remarks. This is not to say that Khrushchev does not hold serious views on strategic matters, or that his views are without effect on the Soviet military establishment. Yet he is, after all, an amateur in military matters, and is without doubt exposed to a great deal of pressure from established military professionals. The exuberance of his occasional remarks is probably subject

(Attachment given to A. Smith by DCP)

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to correction and change by his military advisors.

2. [] we think that Khrushchev's remarks [] reflect some of the considerations which influence present Soviet military and disarmament policies. They indicate that the USSR, like other military powers, is feeling the economic burden of extensive and changing military programs. We believe it is true that the USSR is substituting long-range missiles for long-range bombers in its future programs; indeed, production of all types of bomber aircraft has ceased in the USSR, save for slight continuing production of B-5s.

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3. At the same time, there is no evidence to suggest that the Soviets expect to cut down their military expenditures in years to come, either unilaterally or as the result of a far-reaching disarmament agreement with the Western powers. The present level of their military expenditures can, we believe, be maintained or slightly increased without jeopardizing the aims of the new

Seven-Year Plan. More specifically, there is no evidence to support the conclusion that the Soviets will neglect to maintain the manned bomber forces which they already have; and we believe that they will keep them in being for some time. Likewise, we find every reason to believe that they intend to maintain a substantial conventional force structure, pursuant to their aim of having large and balanced military forces ready for many different sorts of contingency.

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5. Regarding conversion of bombers, Khrushchev could have been referring to the obsolete BULL propeller-driven aircraft no longer used in bomber units. Many

of these underwent minor modifications and over 200 are now believed to be employed as transports by military aviation. He might also have been referring to conversion from the production of BEAR turbo-prop aircraft to production of the similar TU-114 passenger transport, a development which we believe has occurred.

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES:

ABBOT SMITH
Acting Chairman

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Remarks:

The Director retained only the original of the attached. These copies are returned for your disposition.

Afraid he didn't like it well enough to use. Abt

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